

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING AN APPEAL TO REHABILITATION  
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICE REGARDING A DISAPPROVED  
MERIT REVIEW PROPOSAL**

1. Rehabilitation Research and Development (RR&D) Service permits submission of a **formal request** to appeal decisions concerning merit reviewed proposals. To be considered, the appeal document must be received by RR&D Service within 4 weeks from the date of the notification letter. **Only 'disapproved' proposals may be appealed.** Proposals that are not “disapproved,” but are assigned priority scores which preclude funding can not be appealed. The appeal process is designed to uncover potential procedural errors, not to resolve differences on scientific points of view between the applicant and the reviewers. The appeal process is not designed to circumvent Merit Review Board recommendations.
2. The Merit Review Board **Summary Statement** is the only document acceptable as the basis for an appeal. The individual reviewers' critiques may not be used in the appeal document. As stated in the notification letter, reviewers' critiques are prepared prior to the plenary session, whereas the Summary Statement represents the final recommendations of the Board based on its collective deliberations.
3. The appeal document must be limited to five single typewritten pages. It needs to indicate specific points and address possible misinterpretation, misunderstanding or bias by the Board. All information contained in the appeal must have been part of the original proposal. **No new information** can be introduced in an appeal.
4. The appeal must be **reviewed and approved** by the local Research and Development (R&D) Committee, Associate Chief of Staff (ACOS) for R&D, and accompanied by a supporting letter from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facility Director. An original and six copies of the appeal and the supporting documents must be submitted to:  
  
Rehabilitation Research and Development Service  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
Program Analysis and Review Section (122P)  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20420
5. RR&D Service will provide a written determination to the investigator within 60 days after receipt of the formal appeal.